

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support the Higher Education Relief Act, the HEROES Act, as it is called.

Since September 11 and now with the activities of the war in Iraq, this Nation is sending our men and women, our young sons and daughters, into harm's way, into a conflict the likes of which this Nation has never seen before. And they do so in the name of America, in the name of liberty, freedom and dignity, which the United States stands for.

But during this time, this legislation will now grant to the Secretary of Education the authority and the power to grant to the students who are overseas now the relief that they need. It does that in three ways. First of all, it provides to the Reservists who are leaving from their jobs to go overseas right now relief from making student loan payments for a period of time while they are away.

Secondly, it provides to the borrowers and to the families who are back here at home relief from receiving letters and phone calls from the lenders while they are in service. And, thirdly, this legislation provides relief through consecutive service requirements to be considered uninterrupted while they are overseas.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support the HEROES Act and to support our troops as well.

#### TRIBUTE TO CESAR CHAVEZ

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, Cesar Chavez was a champion for the poor and underserved people in America. He did not care about politics, money, or votes; he cared about people and their children. He sacrificed so they may have a better life.

Cesar gave Latinos in this country a voice. He touched the lives of millions with nonviolent struggle for justice, education, equality, and hope.

His life is a testament to the notion that victory can be won without violent confrontation. He used boycotts, pickets, strikes, and fasts to achieve this goal. But he never raised his hand or encouraged his followers to raise their hands in anger or hate or violence. This is a lesson that the world should be reminded of right now.

Cesar was committed so that he would be willing to sacrifice his own life so that violence was not used. He fasted many times. He proved that his commitment through his persistence, hard work, faith, and willingness to sacrifice for La Causa.

The terrible suffering of the farm workers and their children by crushing farm workers' rights, the dangers of pesticides, the denial of fair and Federal elections, Cesar's fast was a heartfelt prayer for purification and strength for all of those who worked

beside him in this movement. His words will always be true in our lives that say: Si, se puede.

Yesterday was Cesar Chavez's birthday. This would be a great day to honor him in the Nation every year. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H. Res. 112 calling for a National Cesar Chavez holiday.

□ 1215

#### IRAQ

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, our forces have been in action in Iraq for 2 weeks. In that time, they have achieved great success. They have moved hundreds of miles and are beginning to encircle Baghdad and the regime of Saddam Hussein.

They have begun to distribute humanitarian aid to the long-suffering people of Iraq. They have weakened the enemy forces significantly. They have fought off groups of Saddam's thugs who are desperate to hold on to power. In short, the plan is going forward in an undaunted fashion.

As President Bush had stated time and time again, we may not know the duration of this war, but we do know its outcome: Our forces will disarm Iraq and will force the tyrannical regime of Saddam Hussein from power. The day of liberation for the people of Iraq is near, and they will be free. We will not tire, and we will not stop until we achieve our goals. I have no doubt that our forces are up to the task.

I urge every American to keep the men and women of our Armed Forces in their thoughts and in their prayers. We must support our troops as they fight to protect freedom and to defeat the forces of terror.

#### IN SUPPORT OF VETERANS

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ. Madam Speaker, I stand before Members today outraged at the disgraceful treatment of our Nation's veterans. While some may disagree with the United States' decision to lead the charge against Iraq, all would agree that the men and women putting their lives on the line deserve our unwavering support. These volunteers deserve respect not only during times of war, but also when they return home.

The administration has spent a great deal of time showcasing our proud troops, but that same administration is attempting to make cuts to health care and other benefits that impact our veterans. Unless this body takes action, many veterans will be financially responsible for paying for the injuries they receive as a direct result of their

sacrifice in defending us and our values.

This is hypocrisy at its best. What kind of message does this send to our troops? It says that we appreciate them putting their lives on the line when we need them, but we cannot offer them that same assistance when they need us.

House Concurrent Resolution 95, the budget resolution that recently passed the House, would require an across-the-board cut of 1 percent in mandatory appropriations for veterans programs. This budget would cut compensation for service-connected disabilities and education benefits and other health care funding by \$14 billion over the next 10 years.

In addition, while the Bush budget anticipates an increase in the number of veterans eligible for compensation due to service-connected disabilities, the budget does not add one dime for benefits for additional disabilities and deaths.

As an American, as a patriot, and as a Member of this esteemed body, I encourage all Members to support the efforts to restore the funding cuts in mandatory spending for veterans benefits. Our past and future veterans deserve the respect and gratitude of this Nation. The least we can do is take care of them when they return home from defending our American values.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION RELIEF OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS ACT OF 2003

Mr. KLINE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1412) to provide the Secretary of Education with specific waiver authority to respond to a war or other military operation or national emergency.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1412

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS; REFERENCE.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003".

(b) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) There is no more important cause than that of our nation's defense.

(2) The United States will protect the freedom and secure the safety of its citizens.

(3) The United States military is the finest in the world and its personnel are determined to lead the world in pursuit of peace.